

Security Message for U.S. Citizens – Scheduled Protest

U.S. Embassy Buenos Aires, Argentina

December 9, 2013

Provincial police have either threatened or executed strikes in demand of salary hikes in over half of Argentina's 24 provinces. There has been sporadic looting in various regions and attendant violence. Holiday-season looting in the city of Cordoba – Argentina's second-largest city and agricultural hub – on December 4 triggered this wave of activity. As of the drafting of this report, there were ongoing strikes or threatened strikes in Chaco, Chubut, Corrientes, Entre Rios, Jujuy, Mendoza, Rio Negro, San Juan, San Luis, Santa Fe, Tucuman, and parts of Buenos Aires Province. Media report that resolutions have been reached in similar situations in La Rioja, Neuquen, Catamarca, and Cordoba.

Since December 4, four people have been killed and more than 200 injured as looters have taken advantage of police strikes. Indiscriminate in nature, end-of-year crime-related violence is cyclical and generally not directed toward American citizens or U.S. interests. U.S. Embassy Buenos Aires recommends that U.S. citizens take common-sense precautions and avoid gatherings or any other event where crowds have congregated to protest or engage in looting.

Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence. You should avoid areas of demonstrations, and exercise caution if in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations. Review your personal security plans; remain aware of your surroundings, including local events; and monitor local news stations for updates. Maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to enhance your personal security.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Argentina enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Regularly monitor the State Department's website, where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the Country Specific Information for Argentina. For additional information, refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad" on the State Department's website.

Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on Twitter and Facebook, and download our free Smart Traveler App, available through iTunes and Google play, to have travel information at your fingertips.

The U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires is located at Avenida Colombia 4300 in the Palermo neighborhood of Buenos Aires (near the Plaza Italia stop on the "D" line subway) and is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except U.S. and Argentine holidays. The main Embassy switchboard telephone is (54) (11) 5777-4533. Recorded consular information, including instructions on whom to contact in case of a U.S. citizen emergency, is available at tel. (54) (11) 4514-1830. The main Embassy fax is (54) (11) 5777-4240. The Consular Section fax is (54) (11) 5777-4293. The Consular Section is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except on U.S. and Argentine holidays. Additional information on Embassy services is available by e-mail at BuenosAires-ACS@state.gov.